

Temple Har Shalom  
Annual Congregational Meeting Minutes  
May 26, 2021, 7:00 PM

Jon Wishnia, President, opened the meeting. A quorum of families in good standing were present as follows:

Adelman	Adler	Albano	Berez	Bu
Cohen	Cohen, Rob	Cohen, Steven	Collman	Cyzner
Danielson	Dicks	Dobin	Drasin	Ehrenberg
Feldman	Friedman	Goldenberg	Goodzeit	Green
Hoffman	Huresky	Javer	Krakower	Landau
Liebeskind	Ludwig	Mehta	Neuman	Paradise
Paradise	Rothenberg	Rubin	Ruck	Ruderman
Sandler	Sherwyn	Silberberg	Silbert	Sobin
Soled	Stoller	Taffet	Vogel	Wishnia
Young				

President Wishnia welcomed all attendees (28 online and 14 in person – grew to 32 on line) and explained how the annual meeting would be conducted over Zoom and in-person including how to vote or let the hosts know that you have a question. The meeting was conducted according to the community's prescribed agenda:

**I. Roll call of the Board of Trustees –**

Present:

Denise Adelman, Andrea Berez, Rob Cohen, Stacey Collman, Debbie Danielson, Caroline Dicks, Bruce Dobin, Resa Drasin, Karen Ehrenberg, Stephanie Green, Debbie Krakower, Meredith Landau, Gregg Paradise, Mark RUDERMAN, Jon Sandler, Alexis Soled, Jon Wishnia, Shelley Young

Professional Staff Present:

Rabbi Randi Musnitsky, Cantor Anna Berman, Josh Greenbaum, Jordan Gelber, Karen Anolick

**II. Reading of the minutes of the 2020 Annual Meeting**

A motion was made by Mark Ruderman and seconded by Rob Cohen to forgo the reading of the minutes. It was approved unanimously. A motion was made by Mark Ruderman and seconded by Debbie Krakower to approve the minutes as distributed. The motion passed with one abstention.

**III. Report of the President – Jon Wishnia, President**

It would be easy to spend my report talking about how this year was one we hope to never repeat again. But that negative framing and thinking has no home here. It would be unfair to all of us. Tonight, instead, my report will focus on how our unique

community is strong and getting stronger, irrespective of the world of uncertainty around us.

We set out at the beginning of this past year knowing that we would need to honor Rabbi's mantra of flexibility in both words and action. We also knew that we would be saying goodbye to our beloved Cantor Berman and that, while not filling her shoes, we would need to find new leaders to blaze their own Cantorial and educational paths, all while delivering the excellence our congregation needs.

At High Holidays, when we came together as a congregation unlike any other, I stated that I felt such joy in my heart and asked you to feel the same. A year later, looking back at what we have accomplished, that joy has grown. While I will now talk about some specifics, this community should be incredibly proud of, and awed by, what we all accomplished together and how it helps position us for our collective future.

Tonight, my report will focus on our family, our facilities, our fiscal condition, and, finally, our future.

## FAMILY

We begin where we always should ... our family.

This year started with a bang, or actually, a crack of the bat. We gathered together as a single community for high holiday services for the first time in decades, as the Kalafer family so graciously welcomed us into their home. The visioning of Resa Drasin and the Jewish Living Committee made this all possible.

We transitioned into the normal that would be this past year. Our religious school, with combined virtual and in person programming excelled under Cantor Berman, Jordan Gelber and our dedicated teaching staff, with the strong guidance and support of our Education Committee. Our early education programming, led by Josh Greenbaum and Nicole Griffith, together with a stunning teaching and administrative staff, got our students into classrooms, while complying with all state mandates and processes. Because of this team of frontline workers, who navigated the pandemic and showed up in body and spirit every single day, doing things above and beyond what they were asked to do, our children in religious school progressed well and TOA@MTS is thriving to the point of already discussing how to manage waitlists for next year's preschool.

Our Covid B'nai mitzvahs have continued with grand success, as well. On a personal note, in a nod toward normalcy, my own daughter's bat mitzvah party happened just weeks ago, 14 months after her becoming the very first Covid B'nai mitzvah. Others, as well, have and are having long delayed celebrations. We all have so much to be joyful about.

On the lay leadership side, our auxiliaries and committees continue to make our community special. Sisterhood has held wonderful and welcoming events. The 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary committee, led by Sheri Cohen, has held some beautiful and engaging virtual events. The security committee, led by Bruce Dobin, has been ever vigilant in

watching over in-person events and in organizing training for those in the building regularly. Likewise, we have heard so many voices, including Denise Adelman, Julie Bu, and Laurie Vogel Krieger, on the need for our community to be present, fighting anti-Semitism and supporting Israel. There is no more sacred honor for our community than to join this cause.

## FACILITIES

As to our facilities, many congregants do not often get to peek behind the curtains to see what is happening, so please be aware of the amazing things that have been and still are going on just down the halls.

We have sourced, sought and won numerous grants through the Temple and preschool to help protect and modernize our building. These grants, and the ingenuity and hard work of our professional staff, including Alex Hermes and his maintenance team, have allowed us to maintain a clean, safe building.

As our building has become more beautiful, with a new entrance, accessibility for all with our elevator and a revitalized upstairs elevator lobby, we are also becoming more functional. We are reconfiguring our offices and classrooms to help ease the burdens for our clergy, professional staff and teachers and make our space even more welcoming to our congregation as we re-open.

## FISCAL

With respect to our fiscal condition, I have previously stated that we are fortunate to be able to act from position of strength. Undergirding this ability is the way we have modernized and streamlined access to and presentation of our financial information and the continued success in creating budgets that we can meet or exceed. Our treasurer, Rob Cohen, will talk about the specifics of our financial position. But I am thrilled to state that our position of strength is even stronger heading into the future and that is thanks to Rob, Karen Ehrenberg, and our bookkeeper, Angel Van Winkle, among others. With dedicated people like Rob, Karen, and Angel, we have been able to do amazing things, like present real-time monthly financials at board meetings and get our second PPP loan in record time.

## FUTURE

Now, let's end at the beginning and then bring us back to the future.

This Temple, this community, this family, has undergone a radical revitalization, starting back when Stephanie Green and Karen Ehrenberg were co-presidents. We completed construction of new elevator, we modernized our dues system and streamlined our membership through ShulCloud, we acquired a pre-school out of bankruptcy, bringing new members and frankly, sorely needed new dollars to our home, we have welcome an average of over one new family per month into our community, and so much more.

As we celebrate our 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary and start the process of paying down our mortgage through Kol Achad (including seed funding that has already been applied to reduce our

principal – thank you anonymous donors!), we stand ready for THS 2.0 or maybe 3.0 or 4.0.

28 years ago, a student cantor joined us. Cantor Berman brought her husband and one month old son. As she grew with our congregation, so too did her family, with two daughters. During her tenure at Temple Har Shalom, Cantor Berman has celebrated more than 100 baby namings, 800 B'nai Mitzvah, 300 Confirmations, 60 weddings/unions, in addition to serving as faculty to thousands of children in Jewish summer camps.

When Cantor Berman announced her retirement, effective only a month from now, we knew a new chapter in our community would be unfolding. We thank Cantor Berman for everything she has done, and we gladly welcome her as our Cantor Emerita effective July 1. She will always remain a member of this congregation, this community, this family. That is why we were so thrilled to announce the creation of the Cantor Anna S. Berman Torah Fund, dedicated to the care, dressing and repair of our Torahs and other Judaica. This new fund is already one of our largest dedicated funds at THS because of the support of so many in our community.

Cantor Berman partnered so closely with Jordan Gelber and Nancy Haimi Cohen. Words cannot adequately express this congregation's thanks for that wonderful team and for all that Jordan and Nancy have provided us over the years.

With Cantor Berman's announcement, the truly sacred task of visioning the future was upon us. We set out on an audacious process within the context of Jewish institutional hiring. With the leadership and guidance of Rabbi and Josh, we cast aside the traditional methods of hiring, as that would have resulted in a narrowed scope and no optionality toward the future. Instead, we chose to cast a broad net, with an exciting and differentiating set of job descriptions, expressly seeking those that would be drawn to us by our approach.

We said we would have a small advance team to vet initial applicants and a larger group representing various constituents to vet qualified candidates. We then executed on this plan, through many hours over many nights. We discussed candidates, staffing, putting together puzzle pieces, and, truly, visioning the future of THS. When it ended, we joined together with a little Abner Doubleday Cooperstown bourbon, to bring forward the year from the stadium to the synagogue.

This team needs thanks in its entirety. Rabbi and Josh, of course, thank you. Rabbi Wolfman, our consultant, who regularly grounds us and provides sage advice, thank you. Everyone else will be in alphabetical order. Our advance team of Caroline Dicks, Resa Drasin, and Jon Sandler, thank you. Our interview and exec board team of Denise Adelman, Erika Berman, Rob Cohen, Stacy Collman, Karen Ehrenberg, Maggie Goodzeit, Stephanie Green, Michelle Huresky, Danielle Lader, Natanya Levitz, Gregg Paradise, Jen Paradise, and Alexis Soled, thank you.

You matched the boldness of our mission with dedication, discipline, and the desire to help us move forward by leaps and bounds. Because of you, we honored our promise and succeeded beyond our expectations. Thank you all so very much.

As you have seen in our announcements over the last few days, we are welcoming some amazing talent into our family on July 1 and recognizing and promoting our core team at the same time. On July 1, we welcome Cantor Jennifer Benrey and Lynn Anne Cutler into our family.

Cantor Benrey is passionate about uplifting the congregational voice and using music as the lens through which to channel spirituality. She is also inspired by her unique Jewish heritage. A native of Miami Beach, Florida, she is fluent in Spanish and was raised by her Hungarian Ashkenazi mother and Cuban Turkish Sephardic father.

Lynn Anne Cutler joins us as our new Director of Congregational Education. Lynn Anne looks forward to working with clergy, families, and lay leadership to provide lively and cutting-edge educational experiences at Temple Har Shalom, helping others love Jewish learning as much as she does.

While we are so incredibly joyful about the future with Cantor Benrey and Lynn Anne, it is imperative that we support and invest in our people. As you saw today, effective July 1, Josh Greenbaum will become our Executive Director, Karen Anolick will become Executive to the Clergy, Stephanie Canning will be our Education Administrator and Alex Hermes will become our Maintenance Manager. Angel Van Winkle will remain our steady and wonderful bookkeeper.

On the lay leadership side, our Nominating Committee will be presenting for vote three new board members and two new executive board members. We need leaders, and these five congregants are stepping up to assume the mantle.

At least year's annual meeting, in the early stages of covid, I mentioned that financially we did not know what the year would hold. And that, more than ever, we need time, ideas, leadership, and dollars.

When we take a step back and breath in who we were over the past year, what we faced and accomplished, it is nearly unbelievable. For real, I cannot believe how amazing this congregation is. Looking at our family, our facilities, our fiscal condition, we must be incredibly proud of what we've done and what the future holds. So, please, as we head into summer and then 5782 peaks around the corner, maintain joy for where we've been, where we are, and where we will be. Thank you.

#### IV. Report of the Senior Rabbi – Rabbi Musnitsky –

Never in the history of our people have we faced the challenge of celebrating, commemorations, education and mourning in isolation. Fearful of illness, we retreated to our homes and suffered the loss of communal gatherings and support for an entire calendar year. Yet, what is extraordinary is how we as synagogue professionals and lay-leaders managed to pivot, adapt, and cope in such a challenging environment! Our gratitude for the sustenance of this sacred partnership knows no bounds.

While the long-term repercussions and ramifications of COVID on our physical, spiritual, social and financial lives will last for years, it is most important to pause and recognize how much we have accomplished through will power, ingenuity, mazel, hard work and determination.

Due to the “magic” of the internet, the accessibility of ZOOM and our pro-active embrace of technology in the Temple several years ago, there has been no interruption of *Shabbat* and holidays; the Jewish lifecycle has continued with *B’nai Mitzvah*, baby-namings, marriages, funerals, and *shivas*; we have educated our children through the extraordinary ingenuity and creativity of our education team under the guidance of Cantor Berman and the Education Committee, with hybrid learning and social get-togethers; our auxiliaries and the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Committee have maintained their staples and introduced us to new and inventive ways of building community with joyous and delicious celebrations; **Knead to Feed** still actively sends desperately needed funds to help the hungry; and clothing, food and toy drives aid the greater community. And even during the High Holy Days, we made history at the Ballpark! In short, the list of our activities and outreach during COVID has been robust and remarkable. Simultaneously, our building remained open and functioned every day of the week housing more than 100 students at TOA@MTS.

In truth, we have adapted so well that we clearly recognize that changing with the times will continue into a vibrant future that looks different from a year ago. Even our staffing will change with the upcoming retirement of our treasured Cantor Berman. (Please remember to join us in honoring her 28 years of service on Friday evening June 11<sup>th</sup> at 7:00pm via Zoom.)

In moving forward out of this unprecedented trauma, our congregational charge is now to seize the possibilities with the same fortitude, resolve, and passion that have guided us these past 50 years.

While COVIDS subsides, there are new challenges that have now arisen that as a Jewish community we must raise our voices in support and advocacy. I highlight the desperate need for our advocacy of the safety and security of Israel and the need for our collective voices to rise as the proliferation of anti-Semitism in America and throughout the world continues at an unprecedented pace. For even as we celebrate and note all of our accomplishments tonight, we cannot take our sight off the bulls-eye: Our holy pledge to support and maintain a strong and vibrant Jewish synagogue community here in the

Somerset Hills that will help to bolster and sustain a strong and proud American Jewish community.

May God grant us the courage, strength, stamina and wisdom to fulfill our sacred mission. AMEN.

**Report of the Treasurer and action thereon – Rob Cohen, co-treasurer**

**Temple Har Shalom Treasurer's Report  
Congregational Meeting May 26, 2021**

**FY21 (July 2020 - June 2021)**

- ❖ The Temple had an excellent financial year and will finish approximately \$26K ahead of its breakeven budget.
  - ❖ As a reminder, that includes paying down approximately \$130K of our mortgage. Additionally, that does not include \$29K of KoAChad donations that were used to help pay down the mortgage additionally.
  - ❖ There was significant support from the state and federal government.
  - ❖ In the midst of a pandemic, our Membership was still strong. We will finish the year with 260 families, only 4 behind our budget. We fully expect, but did not budget, some of the lost families to return in FY22.
  - ❖ Fund raising and membership levels were below budget. We expect, but did not budget, that to improve in FY22.
  - ❖ Clergy and staff did an excellent job controlling expenses so that we did not overspend our reduced income.
  - ❖ The preschool (TOA@MTS) had as good a year as could have possibly had. Revenues were significantly down due to COVID reduced enrollment, but Josh and team also successfully controlled expenses. Enrollment next year will return to pre-COVID levels.

**Temple Har Shalom Treasurer's Report  
Congregational Meeting May 26, 2021**

**THS has received SIGNIFIGANT aid from the Federal and State Government and from both local Jewish Federations.**

Summary of COVID Aid		
Source	Received	Recognized
<b>FY20</b>		
PPP (Round 1)	\$ 359,522	\$ 325,000
Family First Corona Response Act	\$ 62,530	\$ 62,530
<b>FY21</b>		
PPP (Round 2)	\$ 326,305	\$ -
NJ Department of Children and Families	\$ 16,000	\$ 16,000
Jewish Federation of Greater MetroWest	\$ 12,000	\$ 12,000
Healthcare Foundation of NJ	\$ 5,000	\$ 5,000
NJ Economic Development Authority	\$ 5,000	\$ 5,000
Family First Corona Response Act	\$ 1,807	\$ 1,807
Jewish Federation of Somerset	\$ 1,000	\$ 1,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 789,164</b>	<b>\$ 428,337</b>

Questions: Can we confirm \$325K loan forgiveness?

Answer: We need to submit the request by June 11 and expect a ~3 week turnaround – we cannot guarantee by we are confident.

V. **Presentation of the 2021-2022 budget and approval there of – Rob Cohen**

**Temple Har Shalom Treasurer's Report  
Congregational Meeting May 26, 2021**

**FY22 (July 2021 - June 2022) Budget**

- ❖ The assumptions behind the FY2021 budget include:
  - ❖ No increase in congregation dues or religious school fees.
  - ❖ THS will use \$25K of the FY21 surplus to support the budget.
- ❖ Based on these assumptions, the budget is breakeven on a cashflow basis. Again, that includes paying down the mortgage by approximately \$130K.

Use of Prior and Current Surplus	
FY20 Surplus before expected PPP Forgiveness	\$ (245,988)
Expected PPP Forgiveness	\$ 325,000
FY20 Surplus (including PPP)	\$ 79,012
FY21 Use of FY20 Surplus	\$ 78,432
FY21 Forecast Surplus	\$ 26,761
FY22 Use of FY21 Surplus	\$ 25,000

**Temple Har Shalom Treasurer's Report  
Congregational Meeting May 26, 2021**

	FY22 Budget	FY21 Budget	Variation FY22 to FY21B	FY21 Forecast	Variation FY22 to FY21F
<b>REVENUE</b>					
TOA@MTS	1,485,304	1,400,911	84,393	1,118,016	367,288
Dues (Net of Allowances)	730,970	754,137	(23,167)	710,973	19,996
Religious School	98,420	96,870	1,550	95,398	3,022
Kol Nidre Pledges	48,000	72,500	(24,500)	47,637	363
Misc. Fund Raising	37,000	36,500	500	36,711	289
B'nai Mitzvah	23,360	23,500	(140)	31,000	(7,640)
Jewish Living	18,925	28,725	(9,800)	25,012	(6,087)
Other	7,500	10,072	(2,572)	8,586	(1,086)
Building Rental	5,000	10,200	(5,200)	10,509	(5,509)
From Reserves	25,000	78,432	(53,432)	78,432	(53,432)
Grants and Insurance	-	-	-	101,410	(101,410)
<b>TOTAL REVENUE</b>	<b>2,479,479</b>	<b>2,511,847</b>	<b>(32,368)</b>	<b>2,263,684</b>	<b>215,795</b>
<b>EXPENSES</b>					
TOA@MTS	1,335,304	1,282,634	52,670	1,075,136	260,168
Clergy and Office	574,472	532,900	41,572	531,211	43,261
Mortgage	183,668	183,668	-	183,647	21
Utilities	69,250	69,000	250	69,254	(4)
Maintenance and Security (St)	66,000	92,000	(26,000)	61,271	4,729
Repairs and Maintenance	61,784	96,000	(34,216)	94,927	(33,143)
Religious School	42,140	106,747	(64,607)	85,090	(42,950)
Legal and Finance	35,792	34,250	1,542	36,608	(816)
Insurance	34,403	33,000	1,403	33,899	504
Jewish Living	24,291	31,088	(6,797)	17,629	6,662
Technology	19,000	15,000	4,000	20,172	(1,172)
Misc. Office	15,875	17,200	(1,325)	15,875	-
URI	10,000	10,000	-	10,000	-
Other	7,500	8,360	(860)	2,205	5,295
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>	<b>2,479,479</b>	<b>2,511,847</b>	<b>(32,368)</b>	<b>2,236,923</b>	<b>242,556</b>
<b>NET SURPLUS</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>26,761</b>	<b>(26,761)</b>

Question: It looks as though there is an increase of ~\$40K in clergy and office staff?

Answer: The reason is because there has been movement of budgeted items between portions of the budget – there has not been a substantial increase.

Question: Of the dues dollars, how much is in the bank?

Answer: All of those dollars are in the bank with the exception of the B'nai Mitzvah fees due to a timing change.

Question: How much is left on the Temple Har Shalom mortgage?

Answer: \$1.247,000 remains.

A motion was made by Mark Ruderman and seconded by Bruce Dobbin to approve the budget as presented by Treasurer Rob Cohen. The motion passed unanimously.



**VI. Other Reports and Communication and any action necessary thereon:**

None.

**VII. Report of the Nominating Committee and Election of Officers and Trustees – Gregg Paradise – Vice President**

**VIII. Report of the Nominating Committee and Election of Officers and Trustees**

2021 Nominating Committee

Chairman: Gregg Paradise (Vice President)

Andrea Berez (Trustee)

Caroline Dicks (Trustee)

Laurie Vogel Krieger (THS Member)

Dana Silbert (THS Member)

- Committee had multiple conference calls and emails; corresponded several times per week to update on outreach to identify potential new Board members.
- Over 2 dozen phone calls were made to Congregation members.

We are always interested in people who would like to serve – be it on the board or through committee work.

**VIII. Report of the Nominating Committee and Election of Officers and Trustees (continued)**

One Trustee is not returning to the Board:

Treasurer: Eric Mandelbaum

We sincerely thank him for all his efforts throughout his time on the Board.

**VIII. Report of the Nominating Committee and Election of Officers and Trustees (continued)**

The Nominating Committee has proposed the following revised slate for election of Officers and Trustees to a two (2) year term beginning June 1, 2021 for the Temple Har Shalom Board of Trustees:

- |  |                                   |
|--|-----------------------------------|
| • <b>Vice President:</b> Caroline Dicks<br>(Moving from Trustee)   | • <b>Trustee:</b> Denise Adelman  |
| • <b>Vice President:</b> Jonathan Sandler<br>(Moving from Trustee) | • <b>Trustee:</b> Jan Cyzner      |
| • <b>Vice President:</b> Alexis Soled                              | • <b>Trustee:</b> Bruce Dobin     |
| • <b>Treasurer:</b><br>Rob Cohen (Moving from Trustee)             | • <b>Trustee:</b> Michael Feldman |
|  | • <b>Trustee:</b> Debbie Krakower |
|  | • <b>Trustee:</b> David Scharf    |
|  | • <b>Trustee:</b> Dana Silbert    |

A motion was made by Mark Ruderman and seconded by Andrea Berez to approve the slate as presented by the Nominating Committee. The motion was approved unanimously.

Below will be the full slate of elected officers and Trustees for the 2021-2022 board year.

Temple Har Shalom  
2021 – 2022 Board of Trustees

**OFFICERS:**  
**President:** Jonathan Wishnia  
**Vice President:** Caroline Dicks  
**Vice President:** Gregg Paradise  
**Vice President:** Jonathan Sandler  
**Vice President:** Alexis Soled  
**Secretary:** Stephanie Green  
**Co-Treasurers:** Rob Cohen  
**Immediate Past President:** Karen Ehrenberg

**TRUSTEES:**  
**Trustee:** Denise Adelman      **Trustee:** Resa Drasin  
**Trustee:** Andrea Berez      **Trustee:** Michael Feldman  
**Trustee:** Stacey Collman      **Trustee:** Debbie Krakower  
**Trustee:** Jan Cyzner      **Trustee:** Mark Ruderman  
**Trustee:** Debbie Danielson      **Trustee:** David Scharf  
**Trustee:** Caroline Dicks      **Trustee:** Dana Silbert  
**Trustee:** Bruce Dobin      **Trustee:** Shelley Young

**VIII. Old business – None**

**IX. New business –**

We are searching for a new Director of Congregational Learning and ~20 candidates have applied. In addition we have received 10-12 responses for the open Cantor position. We casted a wider net than just using traditional Reform Jewish methods. This decision is instrumental for our community and we are so excited for the future of our community once these new resources are on board.

The tentative schedule for 2021-2022 board meetings is as follows:

2021-2022 Full Board Meeting Dates	
All Meetings begin @ 7:00 PM	
<u>June 17, 2021</u>	<u>December 16, 2021</u>
<u>July 22, 2021</u>	<u>January 27, 2022</u>
<u>August 26, 2021</u>	<u>February 24, 2022</u>
<u>September 21, 2021</u>	<u>March 31, 2022</u>
<u>October 21, 2021</u>	<u>April 13, 2022</u>
<u>November 18, 2021</u>	<u>May 25, 2022 Annual Meeting</u>

**X. Remarks for the Good of the Order – Open to the Members**

*To Cantor Berman much has been said but we cannot understate our gratitude for your support throughout the past 28 years from Mountain Jewish Community Center to the present.*

*Thanks to Jon Wishnia and the entire board for leading our community through these interesting times.*

**XI. Motion to Adjourn**

A motion to adjourn was made by Gregg Paradise and seconded by Mark Ruderman. It was approved unanimously.